

Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Proposed Oaks Unit Addition

Draft Land Protection Plan and Environmental Assessment

Why are we proposing to add the Oaks Unit?

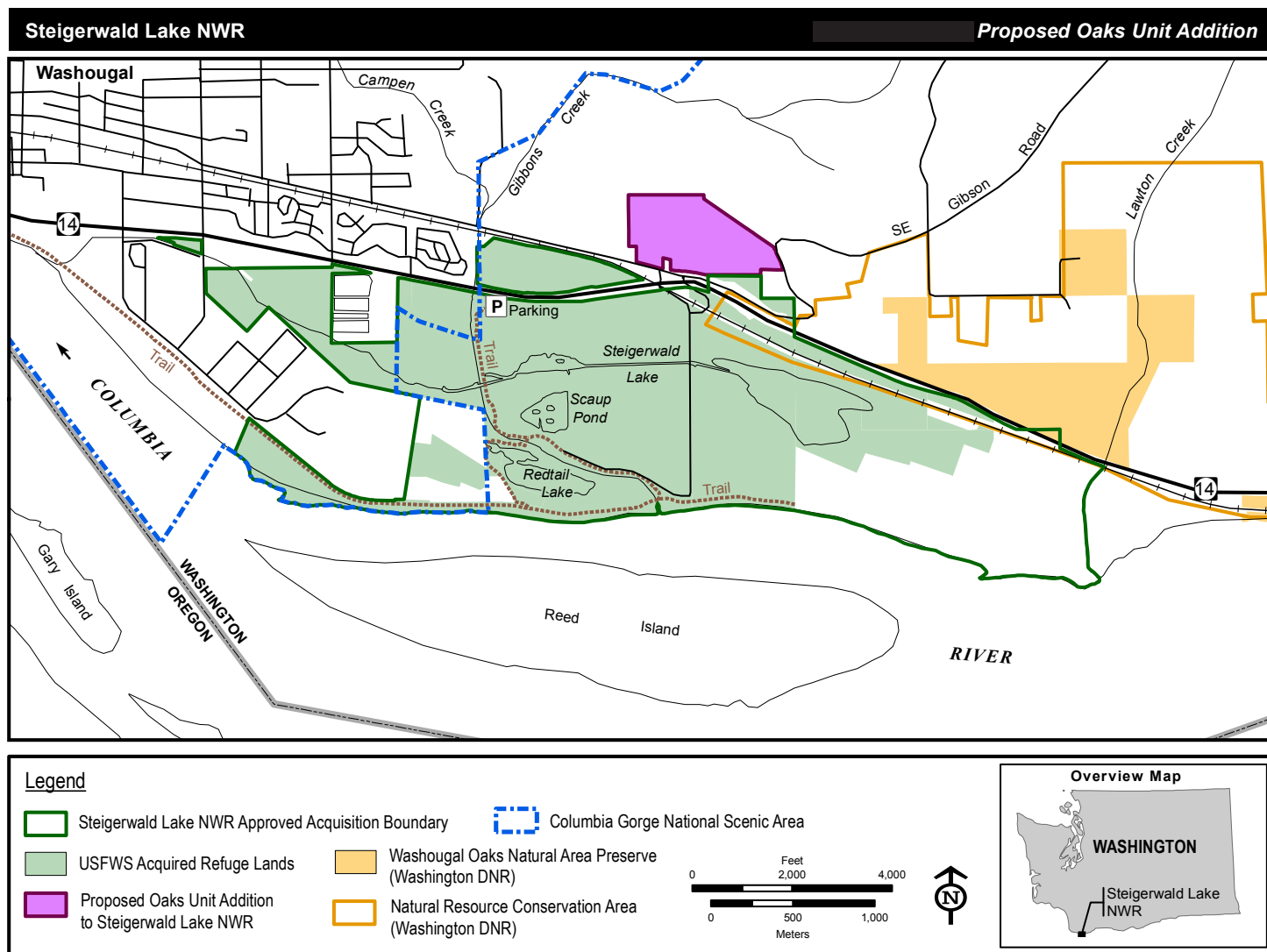
The proposed Oaks Unit is a special place. Located west of the Washougal Oaks State Natural Area Preserve and adjacent to Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge), protection of the Oaks Unit would contribute to conserving rare oak woodlands in western Washington. Continued loss of large-diameter oaks across the region has negatively affected some plant and animal populations that are dependent on healthy Oregon white oak woodlands.

Oregon white oak woodlands are recognized as a priority habitat in Washington, providing rare and variable habitat that comprises a distinct ecosystem contributing significantly to the diversity of wildlife. Numerous vertebrate and invertebrate species inhabit Washington's oak habitats. Oak savannas and woodlands provide habitat for species that are state-listed as Sensitive, Threatened, Endangered, or are candidates for listing.

Several rare plant species, such as the bolandra (*Bolandra oregana*), tall bugbane (*Cimicifuga elata*),

and small flowered trillium (*Trillium parviflorum*), depend on the oak woodland understory and may be present in this area.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes protection of this rare habitat as an addition to the Refuge. Expansion of the Refuge's 1,406-acre acquisition boundary to include an additional 88 acres would permit the Service, as funding allows, the opportunity to work with willing sellers for the purchase of this habitat. Future management may include habitat restoration and public use activities.





Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge
Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Complex
PO Box 457
Ridgefield, WA 98642

Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge *Welcomes Your Comments*

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is proposing to expand the Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) approved acquisition boundary to include 88 acres (the Oaks Unit) for the purpose of protecting Oregon white oak woodland, oak savanna, and Oregon white oak/Douglas-fir forest habitats. The Service has prepared a draft Land Protection Plan and Environmental Assessment (LPP/EA) for public review and comment.

Your input is important to us. It helps us gather information and identify issues affecting you, your community, and the natural resources of Steigerwald Lake Refuge. There is a 30-day open

comment period for the draft LPP/EA. The comment period is from April 7 to May 4, 2014.

You may submit your comments or concerns by U.S. mail to Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Complex, P.O. Box 457, Ridgefield, WA 98642, or email Christopher_Lapp@fws.gov.

Copies of the draft plans may be accessed on the following websites:

- Ridgefield NWRC (<http://www.fws.gov/ridgefieldrefuges/complex/index.html>)
- Steigerwald Lake NWR (<http://www.fws.gov/ridgefieldrefuges/steigerwaldlake/index.html>)
- Columbia Gorge Refuge Stewards (<http://www.refugestewards.org/>).

Printed copies can be provided from the Refuge office upon request.

The Service will review and take into consideration all comments received. Following the public comment period, a decision will be made by the Regional Director.

For more information contact:

Christopher Lapp
Project Leader
Ridgefield NWR Complex
29808 NW Main Ave
P.O. Box 457
Ridgefield, WA 98642
(360) 887-4106

Oregon white oak